

**Depression: Cultural Perspective with Pharrell Williams and 21 Pilots**  
**February 3, 2019**

**Mental Health Month at a Church?!**

- Churches are silent on many topics that are important.
- Many of us have friends and family members who struggle.
- A lot of us struggle.
- As a psychologist I have been brought into inner life of many people.

**I Struggle with Depression But Helped by...**

- competent counsellors who move beyond the superficial
- supportive and insightful spouse who cares about the inner life
- self-understanding and self-acceptance
- people I can be open with because they take inner life seriously
- practical strategies for all aspects of life
- biblical perspective on pain and hope that takes humanness seriously
- recognition that God is not confined to the so-called 'spiritual' realm
- as much as is possible/appropriate, avoiding 'highly spiritual' Christians
- medication
- acknowledging the mysterious and complex nature of depression

**In Canada**

- 20% of population experience mental illness
- 500,000 people per week will not attend work due to mental illness
- \$51 billion spent annually on mental illness
- 11 people die of suicide every day

**Cultural Responses: Surface Attitudes**

- "You ought to/should....."
- "Just....."
- "If people would only....."
- "Have you ever tried.....?"

**"It is what it is."**

- Number of articles- "stupid"
- Tautology- fault of style- saying same thing twice in different words
- Resigned acceptance- not much can be done
- Ending a sentence- I don't want to go into my inner life or explore further
- Shuts down conversation- I don't want to go into your inner life

**Cultural Responses: Deeper Longings**

Pursuit Of Happiness

Avoidance Of Hurt

Desire For Hope

**Reflecting**

As you listen to parts of Pharrell Williams song 'Happy' and 21 Pilots song 'Screen,' what do you hear about the cultural longings to pursue happiness, avoid hurt, and desire hope?

It might seem crazy what I'm 'bout to say  
 Sunshine she's here, you can take a break  
 I'm a hot air balloon that could go to space  
 With the air, like I don't care baby by the way  
 Huh, because I'm happy  
 Clap along if you feel like a room without a roof  
 Because I'm happy  
 Clap along if you feel like happiness is the truth  
 Because I'm happy  
 Clap along if you know what happiness is to you  
 Because I'm happy  
 Clap along if you feel like that's what you wanna do  
 Here come bad news, talking this and that  
 (Yeah) Well, give me all you got, and don't hold it back  
 (Yeah) Well, I should probably warn you I'll be just fine  
 (Yeah) No offense to you, don't waste your time  
 Here's why  
 Because I'm happy  
 Clap along if you feel like a room without a roof  
 Because I'm happy  
 Clap along if you feel like happiness is the truth  
 Because I'm happy  
 Clap along if you know what happiness is to you  
 Because I'm happy  
 Clap along if you feel like that's what you wanna do  
 Hey, come on, uh  
 Bring me down, can't nuthin' (happy)  
 Bring me down  
 My level is too high to bring me down (happy)  
 Can't nuthin', bring me down (happy)  
 I said, let me tell you now, unh (happy)  
 Bring me down, can't nuthin', bring me down (happy,  
 happy, happy)  
 My level is too high to bring me down (happy, happy, happy)  
 Can't nuthin' bring me down (happy, happy, happy)

I do not know why I would go  
 In front of you and hide my soul  
 'Cause you're the only one who knows it,  
 Yeah you're the only one who knows it  
 And I will hide behind my pride  
 Don't know why I think I can lie  
 'Cause there's a screen on my chest  
 Yeah there's a screen on my chest  
 I'm standing in front of you  
 I'm standing in front of you

## Hope

- Having happiness does not guarantee hope, any more than having pain does not mean you have no hope.
- For those of us who are pointed toward God, we recognize that our mental life may have happiness or pain but we fall back constantly on to the hope He provides.
- Whether our mental health is good or bad, we are invited to consider the source of our hope.

## Job's Experience

Recognition that hope is a struggle, even with God, when life is bleak. Oh, that I might have my request, that God would grant what I **hope** for, that God would be willing to crush me, to let loose his hand and cut me off...What strength do I have, that I should still hope? (Job 6:8, 11)

Recognition that there is an ultimate hope with God in the middle of the pain.

Job's Friend Bildad- Such is the destiny of all who forget God; so perishes the **hope** of the godless. What they trust in is fragile; what they rely on is a spider's web. They lean on the web, but it gives way, they cling to it, but it does not hold. (Job 8-13-15)

## George Frederick Watts Painting

I'm trying to be so cool  
 Everything together trying to be so cool  
 I'm standing in front of you  
 Oh I'm standing in front of you  
 I'm trying to be so cool  
 Everything together trying to be so cool  
 I can't see past my own nose, I'm seeing everything in slo-  
 mo  
 Look out below crashing down to the ground just like a  
 vertical locomotive  
 That's a train, am I painting the picture that's in my brain?  
 A train from the sky, locomotive, my motives are insane  
 My flow's not great, okay, I converse with people  
 Who know if I flow on a song I'll get no radio play  
 While you're doing fine, there's some people and I  
 Who have a really tough time getting through this life  
 So excuse us while we sing to the sky  
 I'm standing in front of you  
 I'm standing in front of you  
 I'm trying to be so cool  
 Everything together trying to be so cool  
 I'm standing in front of you  
 Oh I'm standing in front of you  
 Oh I'm trying to be so cool  
 Everything together trying to be so cool  
 Oh oh oh  
 We're broken  
 We're broken  
 We're broken  
 We're broken people, oh  
 We're broken people, oh  
 We're broken  
 We're broken  
 We're broken  
 We're broken  
 We're broken people, oh  
 We're broken people, oh yeah  
 We're broken  
 We're broken  
 We're broken  
 We're broken people, oh  
 We're broken people, oh yeah  
 I'm standing in front of you  
 I'm standing in front of you  
 I'm trying to be so cool  
 Everything together trying to be so cool